

## Surah 23. Al-Muminun

Asad: They will answer: "We have spent there a day, or part of a day; but ask those who [are able to]count [time] . "66

Malik: They will reply: "We lived there a day or part of a day; You may ask those who kept the count."

Pickthall: They will say: We tarried but a day or part of a day. Ask of those who keep count!

Yusuf Ali: They will say: "We stayed a day or part of a day: but ask those who keep account." 2949

Transliteration: Qaloo labithna yawman aw baAAada yawmin faisali alAAaddeena

Khattab:

They will reply, "We remained ?only? a day or part of a day.1 But ask those who kept count."

### Author Comments

66 - This part of the allegorical "dialogue" between God and the doomed sinners touches (as do several other verses of the Qur'an) upon the illusory, problematical character of "time" as conceived by man, and the comparative irrelevancy of the life of this world within the context of the ultimate - perhaps timeless - reality known only to God. The disappearance, upon resurrection, of man's earth-bound concept of time is indicated by the helpless answer, "ask those who are able to count time".

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Compared to the length and misery of their stay in the grave and Hell, their worldly life will seem very short to them.

2949 - The question and answer about Time imply two things. (1) The attention of the ungodly is drawn to

the extremely short time of the life in this world, compared to the eternity which they face: they are made to see this, and to realise how mistaken they were in their comparative valuation of things spiritual and things material. (2) Time, as we know it now, will have faded away and appear as almost nothing. It is just a matter relative to this life of temporary probation. Cf. the experience of the Companions of the Cave: xviii. 19.

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